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Oregon, Office of Superintendent of Public
Instruction,

Standardization of Rural Schools

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SALEM, OREGON

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A Standard School
State of Oregon

A STANDARD SCHOOL

STATE OF OREGON

Flag—Must be flying, weather permitting.

Schoolhouse—Properly lighted.

Equipment—Teacher's desk and chair; desks for pupils properly adapted and placed; suitable blackboards; window shades in good condition.

Heating and Ventilating—Jacketed stove properly situated, minimum requirement; window boards or some other approved method of ventilating.

Rooms—Attractive at all times.

Standard Picture—One new one, unless three are already in the room, framed.

Grounds—To be clean, free from paper, etc. At least three features of play apparatus. Walks, if necessary.

Sanitation—Pure drinking water, either drinking fountain or covered tank and individual drinking cups; individual, family or paper towels.

Outbuildings—At least two good ones, to be sanitary at all times and free from marks.

Teacher—Must maintain good order at all times; supervise the playground; have her work well prepared; follow State course of study; take at least one educational journal; have program posted in room; keep register in good condition; be neat in attire.

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Library—Good selection of books from State list. Case for the books. Books kept upright in good condition and recorded according to rules specified by Oregon State Library and required by law.

Attendance—Average 92 per cent for year and not to exceed two per cent in tardiness for year.

Length of Term—Not less than eight months of school each year.

A STANDARD to which each rural district must bring its school, a measuring rod whereby the farmer may be convinced that he has not as a rule been providing house and grounds equal to those for his cattle and horses, that he has not been demanding the same grade of efficiency of the rural teacher as he has of his hired hands, this is the plan which is making the work of the rural school in Oregon effective. It was begun in Polk County some five years ago.

FIFTEEN requirements were established and any school district fulfilling all of these was declared, after a careful inspection by the county school superintendent, to be standard. These requirements were printed on a large card and one was hung on the front wall of each rural school. The type was so large that the card could be read easily from any place in the room. At each regular visit of the county superintendent he would inspect the school and fasten a gold star opposite each point to which the school was entitled. When all the requirements were earned, a suitable pennant

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was awarded the school by the county superintendent. Other counties adopted the plan and finally at a convention of the county school superintendents, held in the office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Salem, Oregon, July 1, 1914, the plan of having a standard for the schools of Oregon was adopted for the entire State. In order to help those counties which were just beginning, the requirements were made as simple as possible for the first year. The standard will be raised each year so that there can be no stagnation. The points given on the fourth page of this pamphlet show what a school had to do during the year 1914-1915 to become standard.

IN order to put this plan into operation, a county school superintendent should choose one of the most progressive districts in his county. Through the cooperation of the teacher, a community meeting should be called, to which every person in the district must be invited. It is well to have the people feel that this is their meeting. This can be easily accomplished by securing a member of the school board or some prominent person to act as chairman of the meeting, the teacher and the superintendent keeping in the background, but having the organization of the meeting well planned beforehand. If the people of the district are not used to speaking in public, a very simple and effective way to bring them into a discussion is to pass around typewritten questions numbered consecutively, and when the number is called by the chairman, the person holding the number will read it and answer the same. Such questions as the following might be suitable: "How can we

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change the lighting of this building so that there will be no cross-lights?" "Is it a good plan to hire a different teacher each term, or would it be better to pay a little more and have the same teacher year after year, provided, we can find one who is entirely satisfactory?" "Why should the children have good playgrounds?" At this first meeting there should be a good speaker to explain the whole plan of standardization, point out just what is needed to make the school standard and the cost of same. The result will probably be that the people will vote a local tax sufficient to raise the amount of money necessary to make the changes. In most states, the school district has the power of voting local taxes. The Russell Sage Foundation in its report on the various school systems of this country recommends that the district should always have this power in order to stimulate its local pride and initiative. After the county superintendent has secured one standard school and the work has been completed, there should be another meeting in the nature of a school rally or celebration. Here it is well to make use of the press. Newspapers are anxious to get live material, and if the story of such work is well written, all the newspapers in the county will give good reports of the first standard school. After this, there will be no difficulty in carrying the work into all the neighboring districts; provided there is at the head of the schools of the county one who is strong, energetic, capable of securing the loyalty of the teachers, and who is willing to work night and day for the betterment of the public schools.

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